



Developing | Exemplar Essay

## A Proclamation About Rosa Parks

### Standing up for What's Right



#### Clarity and Focus

A central idea is not completely clear, though a connection between Obama's statement and Parks' actions is made ("Obama meant that America always knew the equal rights of people was the right thing, but only people like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. did anything about it").



#### Development

An attempt is made to explain Parks' actions ["didn't give up her seat," "ended up creating one of the biggest movements in history (the bus boycott) and fought for equal rights her whole life"], but the evidence that is included is not always the most appropriate or effective ("He also said 'Now, Therefore, I, Barack Obama, President of the United States of America...'").



#### Organization

Elements of an introduction are recognizable (however indistinct), and a concluding thought is present ("Without these people, what would our world be like today?"). Minimal transitional phrases are used to show the relationships between ideas.



#### Language and Style

A formal style and varied sentence structure are attempted but not maintained throughout. Some precise language ("equal rights," "anniversary," "boycott") is used to address the complexity of the topic.



#### Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait 'looks like' in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see "25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays" by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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Notes

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The fight for equal rights has changed over the years. It has gone from African-Americans not being able to sit where they want on the bus, to the United States having an African-American president. Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglas are all people that fought for equal rights. In a speech honoring Rosa Parks on the 100th anniversary of her birthday, President Barack Obama said, "We celebrate the life of a genuine American hero and remind ourselves that although the principle of equality has always been self-evident, it has never been self-executing." Obama meant that America always knew the equal rights of people was the right thing, but only people like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. did anything about it. When Rosa Parks didn't give up her seat, she was taking a stand and doing what she believed in. She ended up creating one of the biggest movements in history (the bus boycott) and fought for equal rights her whole life. Just like President Obama stated in his speech, "her defiance spurred a movement that advanced our journey toward justice and equality for all." He also said "Now, Therefore, I, Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 4, 2013, as the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Rosa Parks." Like Martin Luther King Jr. and Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks made a change by speaking up, standing up for what is right, and helping others. Without these people, what would our world be like today?